

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1087
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Karl H. Martin, retired District Fire Chief of the Metropolitan Nashville Fire Department and former Chief Sergeant at Arms of the Senate of the Tennessee General Assembly.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of our friend Karl H. Martin, a former Sergeant at Arms of the Senate of the 92nd – 97th Tennessee General Assemblies, during the years of 1981 to 1992 respectively, serving as Chief Sergeant at Arms during the 93rd – 97th General Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, Karl Herschell Martin was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a native of Chicago born in 1917, Karl H. Martin was the son of Joe and Maynie Martin and relocated at a young age with his family to Nashville, where he graduated from East Nashville High School; and

WHEREAS, a member of our Nation's "Greatest Generation," Karl Martin proudly served his country during World War II in the United States Army, receiving his honorable discharge after serving overseas in Okinawa, Japan; and

WHEREAS, following in his father's footsteps as a fire department official, Karl H. Martin joined the Nashville Fire Department in 1943, rising through the ranks during his career to ultimately hold the post of East Nashville District Fire Chief at the time of his retirement; and

WHEREAS, during his outstanding career, Fire Chief Martin fought some of the city's biggest fires, including the Maxwell House Hotel fire in 1961 when he was the "first man in," helping to save lives by evacuating guests before the historic structure was destroyed. He also helped lead the firefighters responding to the 1965 fire that destroyed much of the old Tennessee State Fairgrounds; and

WHEREAS, a recognized leader of firefighters throughout his career, Fire Chief Martin remained active in the “Old Timers” organization of retired firefighters, attending the annual Old Timers’ Day events as recently as May of 2006; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian, Karl Martin was a longtime member of Woodmont Baptist Church, which he served faithfully in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Martin was also deeply devoted to his family, and his loving support and hard work helped his late wife, Ellis Reeder Martin, in her campaign for Metro Council, where she became its second female member; and

WHEREAS, Karl Martin is survived by his son, Karl Herschell Martin, Jr.; three stepsons, Keel Hunt, Shawn H. Hunt, and Kris Hunt; seven step-grandchildren and one great-granddaughter; and

WHEREAS, a great believer in the importance of public service, Karl H. Martin lived his life by example, giving his utmost effort as a firefighter, as a friend, and as a human being. He was a gentleman who was always reliable, dependable and could be taken at his word, admirable qualities that he evinced every day; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this noble public servant, benevolent gentleman, and dear friend; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of our beloved colleague, Karl H. Martin, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character as a courageous firefighter, public servant, and friend, and upon his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Martin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.